



2022 Trinity County
Regional Transportation Plan
Initial Study/Negative Declaration

Adopted February 2023

Trinity County Transportation Commission

2022 Trinity County

Initial Study/Negative Declaration

Report Prepared For:



Trinity County
Transportation Commission

31301 State Highway 3

Weaverville, CA 96093

Report Prepared By:

GREEN DOT
transportation solutions 

Table Of Contents

0. Introduction.....	1
I. Project Title.....	1
II. Lead Agency Name and Address.....	1
III. Contact Person and Phone Number	1
IV. Project Sponsor’s Name and Address.....	1
V. Project Location and Setting.....	1
VI. General Plan And Zoning.....	2
VII. Project Description	2
VIII. Purpose of the Plan	3
IX. Project Purpose and Need.....	4
X. Regional Goals.....	5
XI. Trinity County Regional Goals:	5
XII. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, etc.).....	6
1. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected.....	8
2. Evaluation of Environmental Impacts.....	9
3. Environmental Checklist.....	10
II. Agricultural Resources	12
III. Air Quality	13
IV. Biological Resources	19
V. Cultural Resources.....	22
VI. Geology And Soils.....	24
VII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions	27
VIII. Hazards And Hazardous Materials	28
IX. Hydrology And Water Quality.....	31
X. Land Use And Planning	34
XI. Mineral Resources	35
XII. Noise.....	36
XIII. Population And Housing.....	38
XIV. Public Services	39
XV. Recreation.....	41
XVI. Transportation/Traffic.....	42
XVII. Tribal Cultural Resources.....	45
XVIII. Utilities And Service Systems	47
XIX. Mandatory Findings Of Significance	49
4. References.....	50

O. Introduction

I. Project Title

Trinity County 2022 Regional Transportation Plan

II. Lead Agency Name and Address

Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC)

PO Box 2490

31301 Highway 3

Weaverville, CA 96093

III. Contact Person and Phone Number

Jeff Schwein

530-895-1109

IV. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC)

PO Box 2490

31301 Highway 3

Weaverville, CA 96093

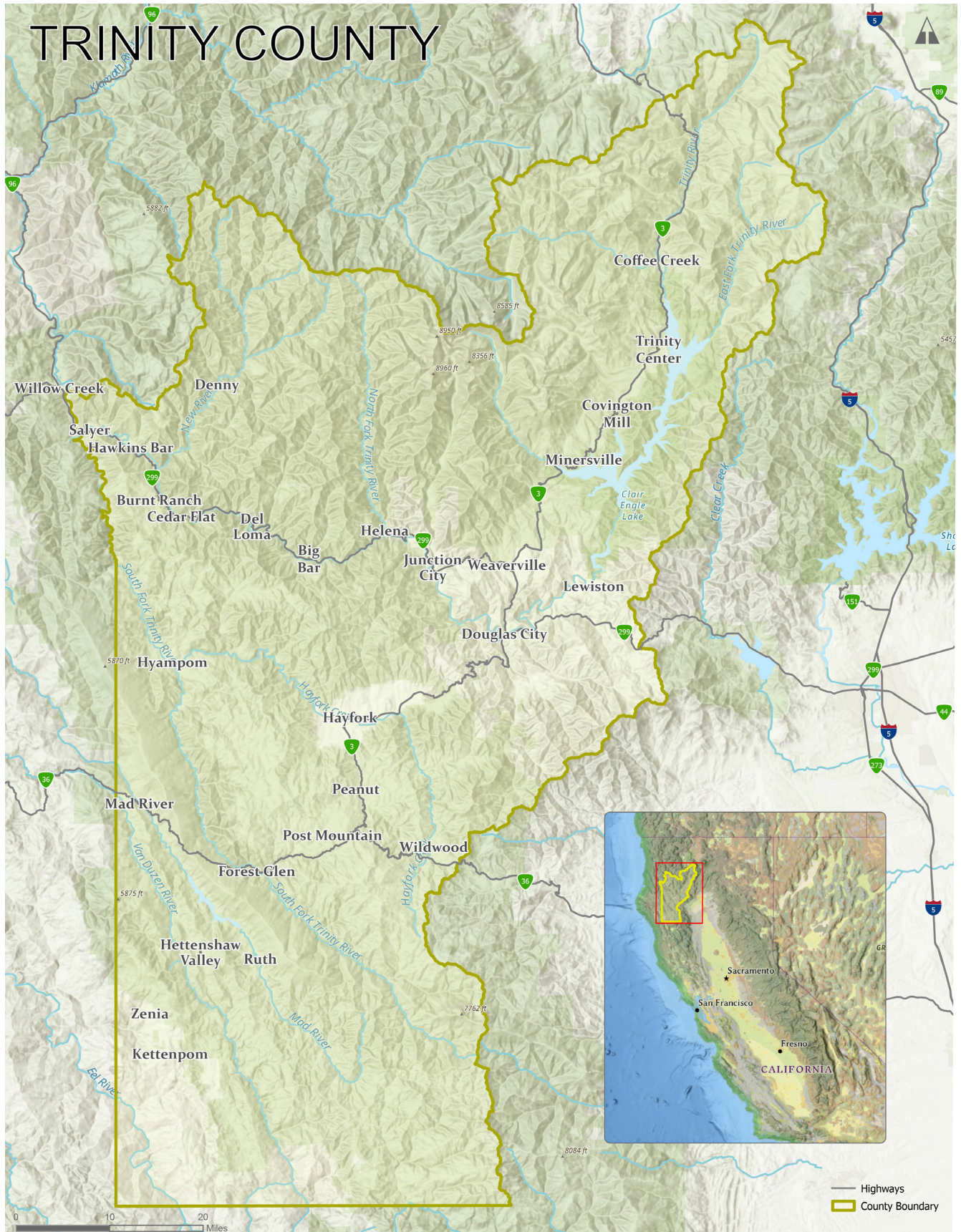
V. Project Location and Setting

The project area consists of the entire County of Trinity in the State of California. According to the 2020 Census, Trinity County encompasses 3,180 square miles of land. There are no incorporated cities or towns in Trinity County, and the largest communities are the Census Designated Places (CDPs) of Hayfork, Lewiston, and Weaverville. The largest community is Weaverville, the County Seat. Smaller communities include Big Bar, Burnt Ranch, Douglas City, Junction City, Salyer, Trinity Center, Hyampom, Mad River, Ruth and Coffee Creek. According to the 2020 Census, the population in the County is 16,112, a 14.5% increase since the last census recording in 2010.

Trinity County is bordered by Siskiyou County to the north, Mendocino County to the south, Humboldt County to the west, Shasta County to the east, and Tehama County to the southeast. The state highways in the County include State Route 3 running north to south, State Route 36, and State Route 299, which both run east to west. Trinity County is a rural, mountainous county located in northern California. The County has a diverse geography that includes the South Fork Mountain and other ridges of the Klamath Mountains and Coastal Range, and is widely recognized for its scenic Trinity Alps. The forks of the Trinity River are located in the County, another draw for recreators and outdoor enthusiasts, with portions designated as wild and scenic. The County's deep canyons and valleys of the Trinity, Van Duzen, and Eel Rivers are rugged and scenic, but can create barriers for transportation throughout the County. There are four wilderness areas found in Trinity County including: Shasta-Trinity National Forest (933,674 acres), Six Rivers National Forest (229,601 acres), Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness (180,877 acres) and Mendocino National Forest (78,643 acres).

Trinity County is served by a county-wide airport system consisting of five public use general aviation airports located throughout the County: Lonnie Pool Field in Weaverville; James E. Swett Field in Trinity Center; Hayfork Airport; Hyampom Airport; and Ruth Airport.

Figure 1: Location Map



General Plan And Zoning

There are a variety of General Plan Land Use designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the General Plan of Trinity County. The Circulation Element from the County's General Plan was used as a reference during the development of the Trinity County 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan and does not include any proposed changes to the County's General Plan.

Project Description

The Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Trinity County. TCTC is comprised of district supervisors from each county district. The Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC) is established by Section 29535 of the Government Code and organized per Chapter 3, Title 21 of the California Administrative Code.

The RTPA is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years. The last update to the Trinity County RTP was adopted in 2016. The horizon year for the 2022 Trinity County RTP is 2042, with transportation improvements in the RTP identified as short-term (0-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years) and long term (11-20 years).

The 2022 Regional Transportation Plan is considered a "project" under CEQA, and this Initial Study is focused on the Plan as a long-term planning effort. Projects identified within the Plan will be individually evaluated under CEQA at the project level when the project is being delivered. The RTP update must be consistent with the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, which requires inclusion of program-level outcome-based performance measures and close ties to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).

The overall focus of the 2022 RTP is directed at developing a coordinated and balanced multi-modal regional transportation system that is financially constrained to the revenues anticipated over the life of the plan. The coordination focus brings the County, Caltrans, local communities, governmental resource agencies, commercial interests, and citizens into the planning process. The balance is achieved by considering investment and improvements for moving people and goods across all modes including roads, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, trucking, and aviation.

The State and the County are at a pivotal moment in creating a new transportation pattern integrated with land use planning. Regions across California have been asked to develop plans for more efficient land use and development to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As per Senate Bill 743, VMT data is annually reported as part of the Federal Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) program.

The State and the County are at a pivotal moment in creating a new transportation pattern integrated with land use planning. Regions across California have been asked to develop plans for more efficient land use and development to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As per Senate Bill 743, VMT data is annually reported as part of the Federal Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) program. The HPMS program uses a sample-based method that combines traffic counts stratified by functional classification of roadways by volume groups to produce sample based geographic estimates of VMT. HPMS VMT estimates are considered "ground truth" by the 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendments (November 15, 1990).

HPMS VMT estimates are used to validate baseline travel demand models and to track modeled VMT forecasts over time. HPMS VMT estimates are reported for each county by local jurisdiction, state highway use, and other state/federal land roadways, e.g. State Parks, US Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service. HPMS VMT estimates are sample based. Due to smaller sampling requirements at the sub-county level of geography and in federal air quality attainment areas, desired 90/10 confidence level estimates of VMT are typically not attained in more rural areas of the state. Planners generally agree that reducing congestion, commute times, and VMT will lead to reduced carbon emissions while improving the quality of life for communities throughout California.

According to the 2020 Census, the total population in Trinity County in 2020 was 16,112. The population has had an annual increase of .85% since the last Census in 2010. The countywide population density in 2020 was estimated to equal 5.1 persons per square mile as opposed to 4.3 persons per square mile in 2010. Despite the population growth from 2010 to 2020, the DOF projection calculator anticipates population to decrease by 6.2% from 2022-2042. As this projection conflicts with recent growth in the County, the population forecast may not be reliable.

VI. Purpose of the Plan

As defined by the 2017 RTP Guidelines, the purpose of the regional transportation plan is to accomplish the following objectives:

- Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region;
- Projecting/estimating the future needs for travel and goods movement;
- Identification and documentation of specific actions necessary to address regional mobility and accessibility needs;
- Identification of guidance and documentation of public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing;
- Identification of needed transportation improvements, in sufficient detail, to serve as a foundation for the: (a) Development of the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP, which includes the STIP), (b) Facilitation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 integration process and (c) Identification of project purpose and need;
- Employing performance measures that demonstrate the effectiveness of the system of transportation improvement projects in meeting the intended goals;
- Promotion of consistency between the California Transportation Plan 2050, the RTP and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, California Tribal Governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;
- Providing a forum for: (1) participation and cooperation and (2) facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries; and,

- Involving community-based organizations as part of the public, Federal, State and local agencies, California Tribal Governments, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation. The TCTC prepared this 2022 RTP based on these objectives consistent with the 2017 RTP Guidelines (adopted January 18, 2017).

Project Purpose and Need

The 2017 RTP guidelines require that an RTP “provide a clearly defined justification for its transportation projects and programs.” This requirement is known as the Project Purpose and Need Statement. Caltrans’ Deputy Directive No. DD 83 describes a project’s “Need” as an identified transportation deficiency or problem, and its “Purpose” as the set of objectives that will be met to address the transportation deficiency. In the Trinity County 2022 RTP, each project by mode included in the Action Element includes a qualitative assessment of purpose and need indicating a project’s contribution to system preservation, safety, multi-modal improvements, and regional and local mobility. These broader benefits capture the desired outcome of projects during the RTP period and intend to enhance and protect the overall livability for the people in Trinity County.

All projects listed in the Action Element of the RTP fall into one of the following designations. It should be noted that projects within each grouping are for the most part in random order. Consequently, the TCTC, County, and/or Caltrans may change the priority ranking or project scope during the RTP approval process.

- Short Range: RTP improvements represent short-range projects that are fully fundable from anticipated revenue sources, referred to as “constrained”, and will normally be programmed during the first five (0-5) years of the RTP.
- Mid Range: RTP Improvements represent mid-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list, but are planned for programming in the 6-10 year time frame of the RTP horizon year.
- Long Range: RTP improvements represent long-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list of projects in Appendix G of the RTP and are planned for programming in the 11-20 year time frame (by the RTP horizon year, 2042).

There are no new roadways proposed as part of the proposed project. The RTP does not directly provide for the implementation of transportation projects and/or facilities. Rather, it identifies necessary improvements in order to provide the best possible transportation/circulation system to meet the mobility and access needs of the entire county.

Due to the regional nature of the RTP, the analysis in this Initial Study focuses on those impacts that are anticipated to be potentially significant on a regional system-wide level. As individual projects near implementation, it will be necessary to undertake project-specific environmental assessments before each project is approved and implemented. Such future environmental review will be required in accordance with CEQA and, if federally funded, NEPA. Adoption of this Initial Study/Negative Declaration and approval of the RTP does not authorize Trinity County or Caltrans to undertake construction of specific improvement projects identified in the RTP without further environmental review and consideration.

The following definitions are used in the Regional Transportation Plan.

SYSTEM PRESERVATION

This category of improvement indicates a project that serves to maintain the integrity of the existing system so that access and mobility are not hindered for travelers. Improvements may include bridge repairs, airport runway repairs, and upgrades to signs and traffic control devices and striping. In addition, because Trinity County is very rural and contains several small communities, a prolonged lack of maintenance funding has created “deferred maintenance” that has lapsed into a serious need to “rehabilitate” roadways to maintain system preservation. Rehabilitation entails of projects that do not include an entire reconstruction including overlay and/or chip seal work that can also be considered a safety improvement. Other forms of required maintenance include culvert repair and bridge rehabilitation. Most road projects listed indicate either “rehabilitation” or “reconstruction” to maintain system preservation.

SAFETY PROJECTS

Safety projects are meant to enhance efficiency of the roadway system, reduce the number of collisions, decrease potential conflicts between various modes of transportation, and prevent injury or fatalities for all transportation system users. Examples of safety improvements include roadway and intersection realignments to improve sight-distance, pavement or runway resurfacing to provide for a smooth travel surface, signage to clarify traffic and aviation operations, congestion relief, obstacle removal so that traffic flows are not hindered, and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe travel to desired destinations. In addition, bridge repairs and reinforcement improve safety and efficiency. The desired outcome of safety projects is to reduce the number of Collisions on the transportation system and to reduce fatalities, injuries, and damage to property and resources.

MULTI-MODAL ENHANCEMENT

Multi-modal projects include improvements for alternative modes of transportation to single occupancy vehicles including biking, walking and transit. Projects that are designated as multi-modal are designed to enhance travel by one or more of these modes, enhance connectivity and fluidity between modes, and to enable transportation users to access key destinations without relying on a vehicle. Typical projects include separated and protected bike lanes, secure bike parking, shared bike routes, sidewalks, transit amenities, street furnishings, wayfinding and signage.

VII. Regional Goals

The comprehensive goals, objectives, and policies that have been developed for this RTP meet the needs of the region and are consistent with the County’s regional vision and priorities for action, which set the framework for carrying out the roles and responsibilities of the TCTC and assists them in their decision-making process for transportation investment. These objectives are intended to guide the development of a transportation system that is balanced, multi-modal, and will maintain and improve the quality of life in Trinity County.

Trinity County Regional Goals:

- ❖ Goal #1: Develop and maintain an efficient and safe system of streets, highways, and bridges that adhere to the existing and future needs while simultaneously promoting preservation of the environment, equitable access, and economic well-being.
- ❖ Goal #2: Support recreational travel by making it safe, easy, and inviting.
- ❖ Goal #3: Upgrade and improve roadways in order to preserve the existing regional roadway system.
- ❖ Goal #4: Increase the safety for all types of non-motorized transportation users; Increase mobility among all types of non-motorized transportation users. Support the reduction of greenhouse gases; Promote public health; Ensure disadvantaged communities have full share of program benefits; Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ❖ Goal #5: Provide, where possible, an interconnected regional system that consists of transportation and recreational paths and trails.
- ❖ Goal #6: Provide affordable, consistent, and efficient public transportation options that will meet user demand.
- ❖ Goal #7: Prioritize the mobility needs of County residents, visitors, employees even with the financial constraints of state and federal transit funding.
- ❖ Goal #8: Maintain safe and efficient commercial and general aviation facility.
- ❖ Goal #9: Provide safe and efficient movement of regional and interregional goods.
- ❖ Goal #10: For Tribal residents within the Trinity region to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.
- ❖ Goal #11: Support tourism throughout Trinity County.
- ❖ Goal #12: Consider the environment and climate change impacts in all transportation decisions.
- ❖ Goal #13: Include climate change strategies in transportation investment decisions.

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, etc.)

Trinity County is the Lead Agency for the proposed project (2022 Regional Transportation Plan) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15050. No permits are required to approve the proposed project. Future permit approvals will vary on a project-level bases for projects included in the Action Element of the RTP and may include, but are not necessarily limited to: Caltrans, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the California Transportation Commission.

1. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

None of the environmental factors listed below would be potentially affected by this project, as described on the following pages.

Aesthetics	Agriculture Resources	Air Quality
Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Geology /Soils
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Hazards & Hazardous Materials	Hydrology / Water Quality
Land Use / Planning	Mineral Resources	Noise
Population / Housing	Public Services	Recreation
Transportation/Traffic	Utilities / Service Systems	Tribal Cultural Resources
Mandatory Findings of Significance		

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

X	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Panos Kokkas, Executive Secretary _____

Date _____

2. Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

In each area of potential impact listed in this section, there are one or more questions which assess the degree of potential environmental effect. A response is provided to each question using one of the four impact evaluation criteria described below. A discussion of the response is also included.

- ❖ **Potentially Significant Impact.** This response is appropriate when there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries, upon completion of the Initial Study, an EIR is required.
- ❖ **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** This response applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact”. The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- ❖ **Less than Significant Impact.** A less than significant impact is one which is deemed to have little or no adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures are, therefore, not necessary, although they may be recommended to further reduce a minor impact.
- ❖ **No Impact.** These issues were either identified as having no impact on the environment, or they are not relevant to the Project.

3. Environmental Checklist

This section of the Initial Study incorporates the most current Appendix “G” Environmental Checklist Form, contained in the CEQA Guidelines. Impact questions and responses are included in both tabular and narrative formats for each of the 17 environmental topic areas.

I. Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

SETTING

Trinity County is characterized by large mountain ranges, pine and fir forested slopes, and tarns with visible granite peaks. Located in the Cascade Range and being home to the scenic Trinity Alps, this area has spectacular views of the snow packed mountains, waterways, vast forests, blooming wildflowers, and other scenic resources that are available from highways and roadways throughout the County. The region’s economy is largely dependent on the visitors who come to recreate in these diverse natural settings, and they are a significant reason why many residents choose to live in Trinity County. The Trinity County General Plan envisions conservation rather than development of open lands, and the RTP aligns with this vision by programming transportation system improvements rather than expansion.



Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-d): Less than Significant. Trinity County includes California State Route 3, 36 and 299, as well as the Trinity Scenic Byway, county and local roadways, and several Forest Service roads. The roads expose beautiful views of the surrounding areas, including the Trinity Alps, Trinity Lake, Trinity River, Mad River, New River, Lewiston Lake, Ruth Reservoir, Van Duzen River, and Ewing Reservoir. The RTP as a “project” does not propose any construction of new roadways that would affect any of these natural resources and aesthetic views. Roadway projects included in the RTP consist primarily of roadway maintenance and safety improvements. Improvements also occur on State Highways and on local roadways, which would not significantly alter the aesthetics of an area or lead to indirect population growth as a result of access improvements into areas that are currently undeveloped. Additionally, the project includes roadway and multi-modal transportation priorities that will be pursued over the lifetime of the RTP. The projects identified within the RTP will not cause any major aesthetic changes to the project area. Additionally, each project within the RTP will go through a specific project-level CEQA evaluation at the project level. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

II. Agricultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non- agricultural use?				X

SETTING

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture for Trinity County, there are 185 farms in the County making up 65,800 acres. The average farm size is 356 acres with 65% of farms being used for pastureland, 29% being used for woodland, and 3% being used for cropland. According to the most recent 2016 Trinity County Annual Crop and Livestock Report, the 2016 gross production of agricultural commodities was estimated to be \$13.5 million. Cannabis farms are also of great abundance in Trinity County, although they are not included in the Crop and Livestock Report. Cannabis operations have been increasing exponentially since the Cannabis Equity Grants Program for Local Jurisdictions initiative was passed in the State of California.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a): No Impact. Implementation of the RTP entails implementation of project-level improvements as funding permits over the 20-year lifetime of the Plan. The proposed project would not convert any agricultural lands and would therefore have no significant impact on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide importance. Therefore, there is no impact, and no mitigation is required.

Response b): No Impact. The RTP does not challenge any zoning or land use regulations as designated in the General Plan. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with any Williamson Act contracts, nor would it result in the cancellation of any Williamson Act contracts. There will be no impact on the Williamson Act contract, therefore no mitigation is required.

Response c): No Impact. See responses a) and b) above. The Regional Transportation Plan will have no impact on agricultural resources in Trinity County.

III. Air Quality


	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

SETTING

The California Air and Resources Board (CARB) divides the State into air basins and adopts standards of quality for each air basin. The air quality in Trinity County is managed by the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (NCUAQMD) and is located in the North Coast Air Basin. The nearest NCUAQMD monitoring station is located on the roof of the Courthouse in Weaverville.

TRINITY COUNTY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

The North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (NCUAQMD) is the regional government agency that works to reduce air pollution within the District. The NCUAQMD prepares plans for the attainment and maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), develops and adopts rules, and enforces regulations to keep air pollution levels down, and issues permits for stationary sources of air pollution. The NCUAQMD also regulates agricultural burning, addresses citizen complaints, assesses meteorological conditions, and implements federal and state programs and regulations. The NCUAQMD works to ensure a coordinated approach in the development and implementation of transportation plans throughout the County. This coordination ensures compliance with pertinent provisions of the federal and state Clean Air Acts, as well as related transportation legislation.



Particulate Matter 10 (particulate matter ten microns in diameter or less) or PM10, is the only pollutant monitored at the Trinity County monitoring station. PM10 can come from dust, vehicles exhaust or heating mechanisms, road salt, and conifer pollen, among others. The twenty-four (24) hour State Standard is 50 ug/m³ and the Federal PM10 Standard is 150 ug/m³. For the past five years prior to the RTP development (2017-2022), the Trinity County, Del Norte County and Sonoma County stations were all designated as being in attainment for PM10 levels. However, the remainder of the North Coast Air Basin was not in attainment.

Ozone (O₃) is smog formed by a chemical reaction of nitrogen oxide, sunlight, and volatile organic compounds. Although the Trinity County station does not monitor ozone levels, the North Coast Air Basin was designated as being in attainment. The North Coast Air Basin is also in attainment for Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) and Nitrogen Dioxide.

Some projects within the RTP propose to reduce single occupancy vehicular trips, which would result in a reduction of emissions from vehicles. In addition, some projects to surface unpaved roads follow the PM10 Attainment Plan being implemented by the NCUAQMD. Therefore, this RTP is consistent with the District's PM10 Attainment Plan.

Responses to Checklist Questions

Responses a-e): Less Than Significant. Many projects outlined within the RTP aim to reduce vehicular trips and promote alternative modes of transportation . However, some projects may have short term effects on air quality, sensitive receptors, or create odors during construction. These individual projects identified in the RTP will be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction.

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Section 38560.5 of the Health and Safety Code). The bill, and subsequent legislation (SB 375) establishes a cap on statewide greenhouse gas emissions and sets forth the regulatory framework to achieve the corresponding reduction in statewide emissions levels.

In January 2007, the Legislature asked the CTC to review the RTP guidelines to incorporate climate change emission reduction measures. The request emphasized that RTPs should utilize models that accurately measure the benefits of land use strategies aimed at reducing vehicle trips and/or trip length. The CTC staff established an RTP guidelines work group to assist in the development of “best practices” for inclusion in the RTP Guidelines. The newest 2017 RTP Guidelines provides several recommendations for consideration by rural RTPAs to address GHG (greenhouse gas) reductions. The following strategies from the 2017 RTP guidelines have specific application to Trinity County.

- For purposes of allocating transportation investments, recognize the rural contribution towards GHG reduction for counties that have policies that support development within their cities, and protect agriculture and resource lands. Consideration should be given to jurisdictions that contribute towards these goals for projects that reduce GHG or are GHG neutral, such as safety, rehabilitation, connectivity and for alternative modes.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that increase efficiency, connectivity and/or accessibility or provide other means to reduce GHG.

- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that provide public health co-benefits.
- Emphasize transportation investments in areas where desired land uses as indicated in the County General Plan may result in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction or other lower impact use.
- Employ “Fix It First” policies to ensure that preventive maintenance and repair of existing transit and roads are the highest priority for spending, to reduce overall maintenance costs, and to support development in existing centers and corridors.

The transportation planning literature recognizes three interrelated components that contribute to transportation emissions reductions. Those components include changes in vehicle technology (cleaner burning engines), alternative fuel sources, and vehicle use. The first two components are typically the responsibility of industry and national governmental interests. RTPAs and local governments can affect vehicle use by promoting transportation alternatives to the automobile, and by managing the demand for transportation. These efforts typically involve goals and policies and/or projects and programs focused on getting people out of their cars and into non-auto modes of travel (mode shifting).

RTPAs which are not located within the boundaries of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (which TCTC is not) are not subject to the provisions of SB 375 which require addressing regional GHG targets in the RTP and preparation of a sustainable community strategy. Future improvements to the transit system and a commitment to a future rideshare program could provide residents another alternative to driving a car.

The following RTP goals are established for Trinity County to increase safety while reducing dependence on the automobile and to promote mode shifting to other forms of transportation.

- Provide a well-balanced regional transportation system that meets the needs of all users.
- Support recreational travel by making it safe, easy and inviting.
- Provide for the mobility needs of county residents, visitors, and employees within the financial constraints of state and federal transit funding.
- Promote a safe, convenient, and efficient non-motorized transportation system that is part of a balanced overall transportation system.
- Promote alternative transportation.
- Provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods within Trinity County and connecting to points beyond.
- Promote the use of alternative transportation to reduce the negative impacts of single-occupant vehicle travel and to increase mobility for Trinity County residents.
- Enhance sensitivity to the environment in all transportation decisions.
- Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.

The effectiveness of efforts by the RTPA to provide transportation alternatives and to implement Transportation Demand Model (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) policies and strategies can be measured in terms of reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or the expected growth in VMT. VMT reductions correlate directly with reductions in GHG emissions.

Caltrans reports VMT by County on an annual basis (see Figure 2). The daily vehicle miles traveled on County roads increased by 18.6% between 2014 and 2018, or an average of a 4.6% increase every year. Federally maintained US Forest Service roads almost doubled, increasing from 1.35 daily VMT in 2014 to 2.32 daily VMT in 2018. Additionally, State highways increased an average of 1.3% daily VMT each year with a total increase of 5.2%.

Table 2.21: Historic and Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita

Table 2.21 Historic and Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita					
Jurisdiction	2015 VMT Per Capita	2016 VMT Per Capita	2017 VMT Per Capita	2018 VMT Per Capita	2019 VMT Per Capita
National Park Service	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
State Highways	25.420	26.330	25.920	25.190	25.740
Trinity County	9.480	8.300	8.310	8.290	5.840
U.S. Forest Services	0.900	16.840	16.860	16.930	15.210
Total	35.800	51.470	51.080	50.400	46.790


Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data

Table 2.22: Forecasted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita

Table 2.22 Forecasted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita					
Jurisdiction	2022 VMT Per Capita	2027 VMT Per Capita	2032 VMT Per Capita	2037 VMT Per Capita	2042 VMT Per Capita
National Park Service	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
State Highways	27.486	29.343	31.257	33.390	35.741
Trinity County	5.874	5.675	5.469	5.287	5.120
U.S. Forest Services	16.248	17.346	18.477	19.738	21.128
Total	49.610	52.365	55.202	58.412	61.987

Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data

From 2010 to 2020, Trinity County experienced a growth in population from 13,786 to 16,112. Due to the relatively small growth rates, however, future trends are not predictable. Additionally, the population changes throughout the year due to seasonal residents with vacation homes. A variable formula was used to forecast average daily VMT based on the average annual change from 2015-2019. Roadway segments with no increases or decreases in this time period were projected at a matching constant rate. Roadways with significant average VMT increases were projected at a higher rate of increase in proportion to VMT increases experienced between 2015 and 2019. Road segments that experienced no change between 2015 and 2019 have been projected to remain constant. Based on this trend and the guidelines established in the 2017 RTP guidelines, the County is not required to run



a network travel demand model to estimate VMT. The guidelines cite the lack of road congestion and the fact that emission changes from higher-MPG vehicles will continue to help the County comply with future emission caps established by the California Air Resources Board as part of AB 32. Increases in VMT in the region are mainly due to interregional freight moving within and through Trinity County. The Trinity County region will rapidly need to prepare for vehicle electrification. In addition to personal vehicles and the transit fleet, Trinity County Regional Transportation Plan sets forth goals and objectives to prepare roadways to address sustainable freight transition. It is recommended that further planning efforts are needed to prepare for and implement Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure readiness, electric vehicle plug-in stations, and other planned improvements that would benefit economic outcomes while reducing the impacts of climate change on the region.

The Trinity County 2022 RTP recognizes that non-auto mobility options including walking, biking and transit, require coordinated land use decisions and improved infrastructure. To this degree, the goals and policies in the RTP are consistent with the County's proposed general plan revisions to provide a balanced multi-modal transportation system that includes non-auto choices for access and mobility. The County is committed to implementing these types of policies and strategies that reduce reliance on the automobile and contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Although the RTP mentions projects that will enhance the county-wide transportation system, the proposed improvements would not influence VMT or population levels, nor would it significantly alter current air quality levels. As such, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality, and no mitigation is required.

IV. Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?			X	

SETTING

The elevation in Trinity County ranges from 2,000 feet in the Weaverville basin to near 10,000 feet in the Trinity Alps. With such extreme ranges in elevation and topography, the County has a wide variety of climate, vegetation, and soil distributions. This also affects the presence of certain flora and fauna within the County. The County's wide array of vegetation supports an abundance of animals throughout the diverse geography. The many wilderness areas in the County include conifer and oak forests, wetlands, riparian areas, fens, and migratory corridors for animals. One sample study of fens in Shasta Trinity National Forest collected 85 different vascular plant species and 18 species of mosses. Migratory deer are of particular abundance throughout the County and tend to reside in the Trinity Alps during warmer months before migrating to lower elevations during winter. Threatened, endangered or special interest species in the County include the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and northern spotted owl (Threatened/Endangered); fisher, goshawk and marten (sensitive), black-tailed deer, douglas tree squirrel and western gray squirrel (harvest); tule elk (special interest); and acorn woodpecker, pileated woodpecker, and California thrasher (maintenance). The Forest Service is active in Trinity County and maintains vegetation and wildlife management programs and strategies to maintain and enhance plant and animal species in the County. One specific Ecological Restoration project aims to provide trail rehabilitation, improve fish passage, aquatic habitat improvement, meadow restoration and sediment inventory/restoration.

Major water bodies in Trinity County include the forks of the Trinity River, New River, Eel River, Mad River, Van Duzen River, Trinity Lake, Lewiston Lake, Ruth Reservoir and Ewing Reservoir. Runoff streams up in the Trinity Alps are also abundant during the winter and spring months and support various fish species such as various kinds of trout, small mouth bass, and coho salmon.

STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

The goals identified in the Policy Element (Chapter 3) of the RTP consider stressors identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies separate conservational provinces broken into subzones called ecoregions by the SWAP. Trinity County crosses through the North Coast and Klamath Region Province. In the North Coast and Klamath Region Province, Trinity County is classified within the Klamath Mountains, Northern California Coast Ranges, and Northern California Interior Coast Ranges ecoregion. The SWAP identifies sensitive species, habitat stressors, and suggested conservation goals and actions for each of the ecoregions in California. According to the SWAP, the major stressors within Trinity County are as follows:

- Agricultural and forestry effluent
- Annual and perennial non-timber crops
- Climate change
- Commercial and industrial uses
- Dams and water management/use
- Fire and fire suppression
- Household sewage and urban wastewater
- Housing and urban areas
- Invasive plants

- Livestock, farming, and ranching
- Logging and wood harvesting
- Parasites, pathogens and diseases

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Although Trinity County includes the Trinity Alps, Klamath Mountains and Coastal Range, the California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) was not developed on a county-basis. The larger region that applies to Trinity County contains some species, stressors and recommended actions do not pertain to Trinity County as the region encompasses a larger geographic area. However, this consultation with the SWAP is mandatory and still provides relevant information. For a complete list of actions suggested for wildlife management in Trinity County, see Attachment C of the Regional Transportation Plan.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (CDFW) CALIFORNIA NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE (CNDDDB)

A review was performed of county-wide species using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The information in the species list includes known occurrences and historical occurrences of species listed as threatened, endangered or otherwise protected under policies or ordinances at the local or regional level as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, §15380).

The CNDDDB County Species List for Trinity County contains 84 total animal and plant species and communities within the County. Of these, 13 species are classified by the CDFW, with 8 being listed as threatened or endangered. Of those 8 species, 5 are threatened and 3 are endangered.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-f): Less than Significant. The proposed project does not propose the construction of new roadways in areas of the County that have previously been undisturbed. Rehabilitation efforts make up most projects identified in the RTP, which would not disturb any new ground as they would occur on existing roadways. Any project identified in the RTP would go through project-specific environmental review to ensure that no sensitive areas or species would be harmed. The maintenance and rehabilitation projects in Trinity County would not have an adverse effect on any candidate species identified in the SWAP, nor would it have any adverse effect on any riparian habitat, sensitive natural community or protected wetland identified in the County. The Plan would not interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with any wildlife corridors. The RTP would not conflict with any local protections, nor would it conflict with any conservation plans. Therefore the current RTP as a plan would not impact biological resources, wetland resources, or conflict with any habitat conservation plan or local ordinance protecting natural and biological resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

V. Cultural Resources


	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

SETTING

Trinity County has a uniquely rich historic and prehistoric heritage. According to the Native American Heritage Commission, there are several active tribes in the area which include the following:

- Nor Rel Muk Nation,
- Wintu Educational and Cultural Center,
- Tsnungwe Tribe,
- Redding Rancheria,
- Hoopa Tribe,
- Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria,
- Round Valley Reservation,
- Shasta Indian Nation,
- Quartz Valley Indian Nation,
- Wintu Tribe of Northern California

Each tribal entity was contacted during the RTP development process to discuss transportation deficiencies, improvements to existing system infrastructure, and mode specific projects. Following a request for further consultation throughout future projects, Trinity County is pursuing a Memorandum of Understanding with any interested Tribes to ensure thorough consultation on future projects. Euro-American travel through the County and its later settlement are also of interest and importance to



the people of Trinity County, for the County's identity is closely related to these historic events. The first colonizers arrived in 1845, with more coming during the gold rush in 1849. The search for gold and logging drove activity in Trinity County and was the initial reason for the construction of many roads within the County. Prehistoric and historic resources are valuable to the people of Trinity County in many ways: spiritual importance, community identity, aesthetic beauty, historic interest, and recreation opportunities. Prehistoric, historic, and contemporary cultural resources could be located anywhere within the County.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-d): Less than Significant. The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multi-modal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural, historical, paleontological or archaeological resources including human remains or cultural artifacts. A project level environmental review is required under CEQA for each project identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and will be evaluated at that time for cultural resources. This Plan as a Project has a less than significant impact on the environment and no mitigation is required.

VI. Geology And Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off- site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?			X	

SETTING

Trinity County is a rugged, mountainous county with extensive ranges of geography. It contains an extensive wild and scenic river system and the terrain is rugged and forested, with the highest points at around 9,000 feet. Trinity County is underlain predominately by Paleozoic Marine rocks in the Western Klamath Mountains, the Franciscan Complex in the Coast Ranges, Mesozoic granite rocks in the Klamath Mountains, Schist of various types in the Klamath Mountains, and Ultramafic rocks in Trinity Ophiolite. According to the USGS, the County's geology can be categorized mainly by post accretion plutonic and related metamorphic rocks. There are no new road beds proposed to be constructed as an outcome of this project, therefore no geological resources are threatened.

Trinity County was not determined to be affected by Existing Earthquake Fault Zones and does not have any active faults. However, Trinity could potentially feel earthquakes and experience low to moderate levels of ground shaking from distant earthquakes.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-e): Less than Significant. Seismicity is directly related to the distribution of fault systems within a region. Depending on activity patterns, faults and fault-related geologic features may be classified as active, potentially active, or inactive. The entire State of California is considered seismically active and is susceptible to seismic ground shaking, however, the most highly active fault zones are along the coastal areas.

FAULT RUPTURE.


Ruptures to the fault line can occur due to earthquakes or fault creeps. The Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act requires active earthquake fault zones to be mapped and it provides special development considerations within these zones. While Trinity County could be affected by distant earthquakes, there are no Alquist-Priolo Fault zones within Trinity County.

SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING.

Some possibility of seismic ground shaking in California is expected. Due to this expectation, California requires special design considerations for all structural improvements in accordance with the seismic design provisions in the California Building Code. These seismic design provisions require enhanced structural integrity based on several risk parameters. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering review at each project-specific level to ensure that the structural integrity is consistent with state requirements. As such, implementation of the proposed RTP as a project would result in a less than significant impact from seismic ground shaking.

LIQUEFACTION.

Liquefaction typically requires a significant sudden decrease of shearing resistance in cohesion-less soils and a sudden increase in water pressure, which is typically associated with an earthquake of high magnitude. The potential for liquefaction is highest when groundwater levels are high, and loose, fine, sandy soils occur at depths of less than 50 feet. Most areas of Trinity County are at a low risk of hazards from liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP



would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from liquefaction.

LANDSLIDES.

Landslides include rockfalls, deep slope failure, and shallow slope failure. Factors such as the geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for landslides. A common trigger for landslides results from the construction of new roadways. Most roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of maintenance or repair of existing facilities, and no new roadways are proposed in the 2022 RTP. Furthermore, any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed project-level review. Therefore, the potential for landslides is considered less than significant.

LATERAL SPREADING.

Lateral spreading typically results when ground shaking moves soil toward an area where the soil integrity is weak or unsupported, and it typically occurs on the surface of a slope, although it does not occur strictly on steep slopes. Oftentimes, lateral spreading is directly associated with areas of liquefaction. However, any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed project-level review. Therefore, the potential of impact from lateral spreading is considered less than significant.

EROSION.

Erosion naturally occurs on the surface of the earth as surface materials (i.e. rock, soil, debris, etc.) is loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by gravity. Two common types of soil erosion include wind erosion and water erosion. The steepness of a slope is an important factor that affects soil erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soils can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover. There are no new roadways proposed in the RTP, and any projects implemented from the RTP will go through project-level review and analysis. Therefore, the potential for erosion is considered less than significant.

EXPANSIVE SOILS.

There are no expansive soils in Trinity County that have a moderate to high swelling capacity, and most of the area does not have any expansive soils. Expansive soils are those that shrink or swell with the change in moisture content. The volume of change is influenced by the quantity of moisture, by the kind and amount of clay in the soil, and by the original porosity of the soil. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads and structures unless special engineering design is incorporated into the project plans. There are no new roadways proposed in the RTP, and any projects implemented from the RTP will go through project-level review and analysis. Therefore, the potential for new expansive soil issues is considered less than significant.



SEPTIC TANKS.

Implementation of the RTP would not result in the use or expansion of any septic systems. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic, and no mitigation is required.

VII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

SETTING

The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Trinity County. These goals and policies largely consist of methods to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), which is the main source of GHG emissions for transportation. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along state highways or County roads as they are simply maintaining the current system. Keeping all roadways open through maintenance can help to avoid increases in VMT and therefore GHG due to taking longer alternative routes.

The RTP is consistent with any County General Plan updates or County land use guidelines and will encourage infill development and strategic planning in order to assist in VMT reduction and shorter travel distances. Additionally, the RTP includes bicycle and pedestrian projects and transit projects aimed at enabling travelers to utilize alternative modes of transportation. By expanding alternative forms of transportation and not including capacity-enhancing projects, Trinity County is in line with statewide climate change goals.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a) and b): Less than Significant. According to the US Census, the population in Trinity County has increased from 13,786 to 16,112 over the past decade. However, despite this population increase, the Department of Finance projects the population in Trinity County to decline through 2042. As a result of the County's projected population decrease, increases in VMT are anticipated to remain low as well. The RTP includes numerous goals related to the increase in multi-modal transportation options, which reduce dependence on the automobile, and may subsequently result in decreases in total VMT throughout the County.

VIII. Hazards And Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X

h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

X

SETTING

The State of California has adopted U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations for the intrastate movement of hazardous materials; State regulations are contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State of California regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state (26 CCR). Both regulatory programs apply in California. The two State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing Federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Caltrans. The CHP enforces hazardous material and hazardous waste labeling and packing regulations to prevent leakage and spills of material in transit. Caltrans has emergency chemical spill identification teams at as many as 72 locations throughout the State that can respond quickly in the event of a spill. Additionally, the Trinity County Public Health Department strives to advance the health and well-being of Trinity County’s people and communities within the County.


Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-c): No Impact. The RTP does not propose any new roadways to be constructed, and any potential use of hazardous substances used through construction equipment would be properly assessed and mitigated before the project. No hazardous materials will be transported or used within one quarter mile radius of any schools. Furthermore, any specific project from the RTP would be evaluated for these conditions at a specific project-level basis before construction. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Responses d): Less than Significant. There are no locations in Trinity County that are registered with the Department of Toxic Substances Control and included on the Cortese List. Furthermore, any specific project from the RTP would be evaluated on a specific project-level basis. Implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Response e-f): Less than Significant. The Action Element of the RTP includes a list of proposed improvement projects related to aviation facilities in the County. The proposed aviation facility improvements consist primarily of rehabilitation efforts, and the implementation of other ancillary improvements such as fencing, lighting, etc. All improvements to aviation facilities within the County identified in the RTP are consistent with the applicable airport land use plans (ALUPs) and would not result in changes to the aviation and flight patterns surrounding County aviation facilities. Furthermore, any specific project from the RTP would be evaluated on a specific project-level basis. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Response g): Less than Significant. The proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The



improvements identified in the RTP would improve the transportation network in Trinity County, which would serve to improve emergency response times countywide. Construction activities associated with projects identified within the RTP may result in temporary lane closures that may temporarily impede emergency access to certain areas within the County during construction. However, each improvement project, when undertaken, will include measures to allow safe passage whenever possible. Any specific project from the RTP would be evaluated on a specific project-level basis. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Response h): Less than Significant. Wildfires are a major hazard in the State of California and in Trinity County. Wildfires burn natural vegetation on developed and undeveloped lands and include timber, brush, woodland, and grass fires. While low intensity wildfires have an important role in the ecosystem, modern wildfires are exacerbated due to fire suppression, extreme drought and climate change. These higher intensity fires put human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, businesses, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat and ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk. Most populated areas in Trinity County are considered to be in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). This leaves communities at a higher level of risk as they are more exposed to wildland fires. Emergency protocols of such nature are included in the Trinity County Emergency Operations Plan.

The proposed project consists primarily of projects that will improve and rehabilitate roadways throughout the County. Roadway rehabilitation is necessary for improving emergency response and evacuation efficiency. There are no new homes, businesses or habitable structures proposed as part of the RTP. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in increased risks associated with wildfires. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

IX. Hydrology And Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

SETTING

Trinity County gets 43 inches of rain on average. The precipitation in Trinity County flows through the Trinity River Basin. Trinity County’s hydrological sources are dominated by surface water flow from the Trinity River, according to the US Geological Survey. The major sources of groundwater in Trinity County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Trinity River flow, and subsurface inflow.


Trinity County’s population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for agricultural production and economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county’s wildlife resources and recreation attractions. Trinity County contains many lakes and streams that not only are a vital water source, but also serve as recreational attractions. There are 22 reservoirs in the Trinity River Basin. These reservoirs have an appreciable effect on stream-flow and water quality in the basin. The reservoirs tend to increase base flow in streams by releasing stored water during dry periods and reduce flood peaks by storing floodwaters. They affect water quality by trapping sediment and associated nutrients and contaminants and by altering the stream habitat both in the flooded lake area and downstream.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-j): Less than Significant. Implementation of the proposed project would indirectly result in the improvement and rehabilitation of roadways and transportation infrastructure throughout Trinity County. The project would not result in the development or construction of housing or other habitable structures that would be at risk from flooding events and no new roadways would be developed. There are a small number of projects identified within the RTP that may increase the area of impervious surfaces within the County. Such improvements consist primarily of repaving or roadway widening to address safety and operational concerns.

The RTP would not substantially alter existing drainage, nor would it contribute to runoff water. The RTP would not degrade the water quality, nor would it place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area. Furthermore, any specific projects identified in the RTP will go through a specific project-level review to ensure that none of the aforementioned impacts would be made. As such, the project would not result in an increased demand for ground or surface water resources and would have no impact on these environmental topics.

There is the potential for water quality impacts to occur during construction activities associated with the various projects identified in the RTP. Each project is subject to further project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. During subsequent environmental review, potential project-



specific construction impacts to water quality would be identified, and mitigation measures, in the form of BMPs would be identified and implemented to ensure that impacts to water quality are reduced or avoided. Impacts to these environmental topics are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

X. Land Use And Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

SETTING

Trinity County has a General Plan containing policies to guide growth and land use changes.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-c): No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would result in improvements to the County's transportation network, and there are no proposed changes to land uses or land use designations in the RTP. The RTP is consistent with the County General Plan, and no housing would be affected, nor would any new roadways be constructed. Furthermore, any projects implemented as a result of this plan would go through a more detailed project-level analysis. Implementation of the RTP would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan. There are no impacts to land use associated with the proposed project and no mitigation is required.

XI. Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

SETTING

The Office of Mine Reclamation periodically publishes a list of mines regulated under SMARA that is generally referred to as the AB 3098 List. The Public Contract Code precludes mining operations that are not on the AB 3098 List from selling sand, gravel, aggregates, or other mined materials to state or local agencies. The current AB 3098 list (November 6, 2022) indicates that there are 5 mines regulated under SMARA in Trinity County: 91-53-0002 Dinsmore Bar, Mercer-Fraser Company, INC.; 91-53-0007 La Grange Mine, Eagle Rock, INC.; 91-53-0015 Smith Pit Phase 2, Concrete Aggregate Products; 91-53-0021 Blue Rock Quarry 2, Meyers Earthwork, INC; 91-53-0025 Mann Mine. Mann Mine.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-b): No Impact. There are no active mines that would be affected by the RTP. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact, therefore no mitigation is required.

XII. Noise


	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

SETTING

Due to the lack of sizeable industrial operations, the Trinity County General Plan identifies existing noise sources in Trinity County related to vehicular traffic on State Routes 299, 36, and 3. Recreation and tourism can cause higher levels of noise on these routes than would otherwise exist. Roadway construction projects would also add to noise levels throughout the County.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-f): Less than Significant. Implementation of the proposed project consists primarily of improvements to the existing transportation network in Trinity County. There are no new roadways proposed that would introduce new vehicle trips into areas not currently exposed to mobile noise sources from the existing transportation network. The improvements identified in the RTP would not



directly result in increased vehicle trips on the County roadway network, and would therefore not result in increased noise levels from vehicles traveling on existing roadways and transportation facilities in the County. Any noise disturbances to people or animals due to construction activities would be temporary, and subsequent environmental review of project-specific impacts would be required prior to approval and implementation of future improvements to ensure that sensitive species are not disturbed. This review would propose temporary mitigations to sensitive receptors and assign mitigation measures as needed to reduce noise impacts. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XIII. Population And Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			X	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

SETTING

According to the American Community Survey, the total number of housing units in Trinity County was estimated at 8,137 in 2021. An estimated 68.5% of the housing units were owner. The median home value in the County is \$285,700.

According to the US Census, the population of Trinity County increased from 13,033 residents in 2010 to 16112 residents in 2020. Furthermore, Trinity County has seasonal population increases that are directly related to the large recreational tourism and cannabis industries. Transportation planning efforts must accommodate the seasonal population boosts.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-c): Less than Significant. The Trinity County region is not undergoing any major development or construction that would significantly alter the population. The proposed project consists primarily of the rehabilitation of the existing transportation network in Trinity County. There are no new roadways proposed that would extend vehicular access into areas of the County that are not currently accessible by area roadways. The project would not result in the direct or indirect inducement of population growth. The RTP includes projects that would occur primarily within the right-of-way of the existing transportation network and would not displace any persons or housing units. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XIV. Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:			X	
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

SETTING

Trinity County is served by 23 fire departments including volunteer fire departments and the California Department of Forestry, US Forest Service Fire Departments, and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). Law enforcement for the County is provided by the Trinity County Sheriff's Office, located in Weaverville. The California Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws throughout the county.

Trinity County is served by the Mountain Valley Unified School District (USD) Trinity Alps USD, and Southern Trinity Joint USD. Elementary School Districts (ESD) include Burnt Ranch, Coffee Creek, Douglas City, Junction City, Lewiston, Mountain Valley, and Trinity Center. Additional schools include CHYBA Charter and R.I.S.E. Academy. Additionally, Shasta College Trinity Campus is located in Weaverville.

The Weaverville-Douglas City Recreation District provides services in the greater Weaverville area, and the Greater Hayfork Valley Park and Recreation District operates and maintains parks and community facilities in the greater Hayfork area. There are facilities that include community meeting rooms, playgrounds, pools, disc golf courses, campgrounds, and open space. Additionally, there is an abundance of National Forest land, and privately owned recreation facilities within the County that are widely utilized for recreational purposes.



Responses To Checklist Question

Response a): Less than Significant. As reiterated throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Trinity County. The projects included in the RTP would not construct any new roadways into areas not already accessible and would not have an impact on population change. As such, the RTP would not create a demand for increased public services, including police protection, fire protection, schools, parks and other public. Furthermore, every project included in the RTP will be analyzed at a project-specific level to verify this. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XV. Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			X	

SETTING

As discussed previously, Trinity County parks are operated and maintained by the County Department. The Parks system consists of facilities that include a variation of parks and community centers. However, most recreation takes place within the abundance of Federal lands and State Parks within the county.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-b): Less than Significant. As reiterated throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Trinity County. The projects included in the RTP would not construct any new roadways into areas not already accessible and would not have an impact on population change. Furthermore, every project included in the RTP will be analyzed at a project-specific level to verify this. As such, the demand for increased recreational facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XVI. Transportation/Traffic

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	


SETTING

Trinity County is served by three state highways and numerous local roadways. The roadway network provides the regional transportation routes for automobiles and trucks. The three major highways that transverse the County are State Route 3 running north-south, State Route 36 running east-west, and State Route 299 running east-west.

State Route 3 runs north-south through Trinity County, beginning at SR 36 just south of Peanut and passing out of Trinity County over Scott's Mountain north of Trinity Lake. SR 3 passes through Hayfork, Douglas City, Weaverville, Trinity Center, and Coffee Creek as well as several smaller communities. It serves as the primary north-south roadway in the county, connecting central and northern Trinity County with the county seat of Weaverville. Between Douglas City and Weaverville, Routes 3 and 299 are the same route (by statute, SR 299 is the assigned route number). SR 3 carries local (intra-county) traffic as well as recreational and commercial (primarily natural resource) traffic. SR 3 has sharp curves, limited passing opportunities between Douglas City and Hayfork as well as between Slate Creek and Trinity Center and is not maintained during winter months over Scott's Mountain. Within Weaverville, SR 3 provides access between the central commercial district and Weaverville Elementary School, residential areas, and the Weaverville Airport.

State Route 36 runs east-west through the southern portion of the county, entering Trinity County near Wildwood from the east and crossing into Humboldt County west of Mad River. Other than passing through the communities of Forest Glen and Mad River, SR 36 mostly passes through undeveloped forest land. SR 36 provides access to Fortuna in Humboldt County to the west and Red Bluff in Tehama County to the east, as well as Hayfork and Weaverville (via Route 3), to Wildwood and Post Mountain, and to Southern Trinity County, including Ruth, Zenia and Kettenpom via County collector roads. SR 36 provides access for residents of Southern Trinity County who travel to Eureka for shopping opportunities. The capacity of SR 36 is limited by horizontal and vertical curves, narrow lane and shoulder widths, and by the limited passing opportunities.

State Route 299 runs east-west through Trinity County, entering over Buckhorn Summit from Redding to the east and crossing into Humboldt County near Salyer to the west. SR 299 links the communities of Lewiston, Douglas City, Weaverville, Junction City, Big Flat, Big Bar, Burnt Ranch, and Salyer, as well as several smaller communities. SR 299 carries a variety of traffic including local (intra-regional), recreational, commuter, and commercial. SR 299 has been classified as a National Forest scenic byway and is heavily utilized for access to and along the Trinity River. It is also classified as a Focus Route by Caltrans because of its importance as an inter-regional route (for both auto and truck traffic) between the Northern Sacramento Valley and the North Coast. SR 299 also serves as the major roadway within Weaverville, connecting the more established commercial and government center on the northwest with newer commercial and employment centers to the southeast such as the shopping complex with Holiday Market. Due to the limited roadway network, virtually all trips in Weaverville use SR 299, which (in combination with through traffic) results in 299 carrying the highest traffic volumes within the County, particularly during peak summer travel periods. SR 299 has limited passing opportunities, particularly west of Weaverville. Implementation of federally mandated barrier striping on state highways in 1988 resulted in severely restricted passing opportunities. Only six passing lanes exist (four eastbound, two westbound) on SR 299 between Willow Creek and Douglas City, a stretch of 65 miles. The distance between passing lanes for eastbound traffic is 26 miles (Hawkins Bar to Big Flat), while the distance for westbound traffic is a 52-mile gap between passing lanes (Oregon Mountain to Willow Creek).



Other roadways with similar functional classifications as the state highways in Trinity County include Interstate and U.S. Highways. Neither of these roadway types are located directly in Trinity County, but they serve as a route option for travelers in the larger region. Forest roads are also present in the county and are described in more detail below.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-b): Less than Significant. The project is preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan, which is a plan developed to guide transportation investments for all modes of transportation through goals, policies and proposed projects. It establishes vehicle miles traveled (VMT) standards established by the Trinity County Transportation Commission for the County's roads and highways. It also includes policies regarding public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and airports. As such, there is no conflict as the RTP is the guiding transportation plan for the region. The RTP is also consistent with the circulation element of the General Plans and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with that plan. Therefore, there is no impact, and no mitigation is required. Implementation of the proposed RTP would result in improvements and rehabilitation to the existing transportation and roadway network in Trinity County.

Although a slight increase in VMT is likely to occur throughout the lifetime of this RTP, few changes are expected in the ratings of state routes in Trinity County. In 2042, most highway segments are expected to be operating at an acceptable congestion rating.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in population growth within Trinity County and would not directly result in increases of VMT. The proposed project would improve traffic flows and operations throughout the County and would not result in VMT that exceeds applicable standards or thresholds. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

Responses c-f): Less than Significant. As described throughout this Initial Study, implementation of the proposed project would assist in the improvement of the County's transportation network across all modes of transit and transportation. The improvements proposed to aviation facilities in the County would not result in an increase in flights or a change in flight patterns. There are policies and programs included in the RTP that would improve public access to transit systems and alternative modes of transportation, such as bicycle use, and the RTP does not conflict with any existing plans to improve active transportation or transit. The various roadway improvements identified in the RTP would assist in the delivery of emergency services by improving the local and regional roadway network and reducing existing design and safety hazards. The RTP and the projects included within were developed after careful review of the General Plan of the County. The RTP is consistent with the circulation element of the General Plan and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with the above referenced plan. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XVII. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of the Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			X	
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.			X	

SETTING

There are several active Native American Tribal Governments in Trinity County, including the Nor-Rel-Muk Nation, Tsnungwe Council, Hoopa Tribe, Wintu Educational and Cultural Center, Round Valley Reservation, Shasta Indian Nation, Quartz Valley Indian Nation, Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria, Redding Rancheria and the Wintu Tribe of Northern California. During the RTP planning process, Tribal representatives were directly contacted by phone and email prior to the mailing of consultation letters to solicit feedback on the RTP. Additionally, Tribal contacts were included in all stakeholder outreach communication and were invited to all community events. The Tsnungwe Tribe responded with a request for a consultation meeting with the Trinity County Transportation Commission. Based on the recommendations that came from this consultation effort, TCTC is preparing a Memorandum of Understanding with all interested Tribes for future consultation that will include multiple steps of review prior to and during the development of plans and projects.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-b): Less than Significant. The County has a standing Memorandum of Agreement with the Nor Rel Muk Band of Wintu Indians of Northern California that formalizes notification, consultation and monitoring procedures applicable to County public works projects, particularly transportation projects. This agreement requires consultation during the environmental phase of projects that require excavation and allows for Tribal monitoring of construction within the Tribe's ancestral lands within the County. TCTC is also working on preparing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Tsnungwe Tribe as a result of the Tribe's request that came during the RTP coordination process. Consultation is also conducted during the environmental phase with other Tribes for applicable projects within their ancestral territories. If the environmental review reveals a concern about a potentially significant Tribal cultural resource, the County will negotiate with the Tribe to determine a course of action regarding the project or treatment of the cultural resource that can be agreed on by all parties before the project can proceed. This is standard policy and is included in the RTP. Therefore, impacts on Tribal cultural resources will be less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a proposed project would have a significant effect on tribal cultural resources. The CEQA Guidelines define tribal cultural resources as: (1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k); or (2) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe. The County provides notices of projects under AB52 to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice.


The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multi-modal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a roadway or any other projects that would require excavation at previously undisturbed sites would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XVIII. Utilities And Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?			X	
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

SETTING

Trinity County's population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources and recreation attractions. The major aquatic resources found in Trinity County include the Trinity River, North Fork of the Trinity, New River, South Fork of the Trinity, Eel River, Mad River, Van Duzen River, Trinity Lake, Lewiston Lake, Ruth Reservoir and Ewing Reservoir. The Trinity River Basin has 22 reservoirs that help with runoff. The major sources of groundwater in Trinity County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams including the Trinity River, and subsurface



inflow. Drainage infrastructure including culverts and swales help to prevent flooding of the County's roadways, and maintenance of culverts is a necessity to keep water flowing smoothly.

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-g): Less than Significant. The project consists of various roadway and transportation network improvement projects throughout the County. No new roadways are proposed, RTP projects mostly consist of rehabilitation efforts. However, as described throughout this Initial Study, projects identified in the RTP would be subject to project-level environmental review to determine what mitigation measures are appropriate. Future projects under this review may result in proposed mitigation measures to avoid or lessen potential impacts to drainages such as culverts or swales adjacent to roadway and other improvement projects. Projects are anticipated to generate spoils to some degree. However, Best Management Practices (BMP's) are followed for proper spoil storage and disposal, which often occurs at county maintenance yards. The projects constructed as a result of the RTP will all be subject to project-level review; however it is not anticipated that these projects will exceed wastewater treatment sites or landfills, nor would they require additional water supplies for the purposes of the project. As any from the RTP will go through this project-level review, this is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

XIX. Mandatory Findings Of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a-c): Less than Significant. As described throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project is compliant with General Plan land use designations and zoning districts, would not result in annexation of land, and does not propose any new roadways or developments. Any project identified in the RTP will go through a project-level environmental analysis which will propose mitigation measures should the findings recommend it. The RTP as a ‘Project’ would not result in new adverse environmental impacts, as it is a regional plan proving recommendations to the County. Any projects included in the RTP that will be pursued will go through project-level environmental reviews to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures will occur. The project would not threaten biological resources, nor would it affect cultural resources of California history or prehistory including that of Native American Tribal Governments. The proposed project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on human beings. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on these environmental topics.

4. References

California Air Resources Board (CARB), Air Quality Standards and Area Designations (2018).

California Department of Conservation, Fault Activity Map of California (2010).

California Department of Conservation, Mine Reclamation AB 3098 List (2022).

California Department of Finance, Population and Housing Estimates (2022).

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California State Wildlife Action Plan. (2015).

California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), Cortese List Data Resources (2019).

California Transportation Commission, 2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (2017).

California Data Exchange Center, Department of Water Resources (2018-2019).

Trinity County Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures, Trinity County 2018 Annual Crop Report (2018).

Trinity County Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures, Trinity County Crop Report Plus Series Economic Contributions of Trinity County Agriculture (2019).

Trinity County, Trinity County General Plan (2020).

Trinity County, Regional Transportation Plan Initial Study (2016).

Trinity County, County of Trinity Website (2022).

Trinity County Transportation Commission, 2022 Trinity County RTP Draft (2022).